

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

APPLICANT:	Y. Okamoto et al.	CONF. NO.:	8151
U.S. SERIAL NO:	10/671,254	EXAMINER:	P. Dhingra
FILED:	September 24, 2003	GROUP:	2625
FOR:	IMAGE PROCESSING DEVICE AND IMAGE PROCESSING METHOD		

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
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Sir:

RESPONSE TO OFFICE ACTION

Applicants are in receipt of the Office Action dated October 2, 2009 of the above-referenced application. Applicants respond to the Office Action as follows.

Claims 1-8 are pending in the application.

Claims 1-6 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,285,459 to Koakutsu et al. ("Koakutsu") in view of Japanese Publication 09-284572 (referred to as "Tokukaihei"), further in view of U.S. Patent 6,745,334 to Ikegami. Claims 7 and 8 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Koakutsu in view of Tokukaihei, further in view of Ikegami, further in view of U.S. Patent 6,639,687 to Neilsen, further in view of "well known art." These rejections are respectfully traversed.

On page 3 of the Office Action of 10/02/2009, it was alleged that a combination of Tokukaihei and Ikegami "teaches the step of requiring and entry of a password for permitting an interrupt process such as deletion process as taught by Ikegami *such that when user would like to suspend the deletion process being performed (in progress) (as taught by Tokukaihei), a correct password entry would be required (as taught by Ikegami which requires password entry to permit an interrupt process such as deletion process)*" (emphasis in original).

However, even if the proposed combination of Tokukaihei in view of Ikegami was attempted, it would still require entry of a separate password for each "personal box" as required in Ikegami.

In particular, since the Ikegami reference requires entry of separate passwords each corresponding to a particular personal box, if Ikegami was somehow combined with Tokukaihei, the proposed combination would require entry of separate passwords for each respective portion of the hard disk of Tokukaihei. In Ikegami, since a "personal box" corresponds to a predetermined portion of memory, and each personal box requires separate entry of a password, then a plurality of passwords would be needed for different portions of the memory (see, e.g., column 9, line 63 to column 10, line 36 of Ikegami, describing properties of a "personal box").

There is simply no teaching or suggestion in Ikegami that only one personal box could be provided in memory, thus requiring only one password to be entered for the entire memory or hard disk. The provision of only one personal box would defeat a primary benefit for utilizing personal boxes in Ikegami, i.e., that each personal box is separately registered and password protected, and thus corresponds to a separate portion of memory.

Therefore, any proper combination of Tokukaihei in view of Ikegami would necessitate separate entry of passwords for deleting separate "personal boxes" or portions of a hard disk, and thus separate password entry to access those personal boxes and/or stop deletion of the respective portions of the hard disk.

The proposed combination of Koakutsu in view of Tokukaihei, further in view of Ikegami, does not teach or suggest that entry of a password is required for **suspension of an invalidation/deletion that is being performed**, such that "after a predetermined code is inputted by a user, the predetermined code being matched with a code administrated in the image processing device to confirm that the user who requested the suspension of the invalidation is a certified user, and the permitting means then suspends the invalidation being performed in all areas of the image data storing means," as claimed.

Even if the device of Tokukaihei was somehow modified to include "personal boxes" as disclosed in Ikegami, it would be necessary to enter a separate password to access each personal box, as taught by Ikegami, whether for the purpose of deleting the personal box or suspending deletion. It would destroy the operability of the Ikegami reference to somehow allow entry of a single password to access multiple personal boxes or portions of memory.

For at least the reasons discussed above, the proposed combination of Koakutsu in view of Tokukaihei, further in view of Ikegami, does not teach or suggest the Applicants' claimed invention. Therefore, independent claims 1 and 5 and their respective dependent claims are patentable over the proposed combination.

It is believed the application is in condition for immediate allowance, which action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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